Loma Linda Behavioral Medicine Center Volunteer Program

Jennifer Weniger, Ph.D.
Praveen Injeti, Occupational Therapist
Lindsay Daguerressar, Volunteer Coordinator
Stevieann Beach, Volunteer Coordinator
Overview of the Behavioral Medicine Center

- Freestanding inpatient private psychiatric hospital
  - Pediatric Care
  - Adolescent Care
  - Adult Care
  - Geriatric Care
  - Chemical Dependency

- 89 beds

- BHI has associated outpatient programs.
Behavioral Medicine Center Stats

2014 Patient Admissions

- IP Child: 604
- IP Adolescent: 1729
- IP Adult/Senior: 1605
- IP Chemical Dependency: 621
Behavioral Medicine Center Stats

2014 Patient Visits

- OP Child: 1998
- OP Adolescent: 11561
- OP Adult/Senior: 17658
- OP Chemical Dependency: 2581
Why Volunteer?

- Volunteers want to give back to the BMC.

- Volunteers often feel passionately about giving their time and skills to the BMC.

- They want to make a difference in the lives of others.
It is important to identify someone at the organization who is strongly invested in the integration of volunteers.

A volunteer champion will help with interviewing the volunteer and identifying the best fit with interests, skill sets, and program needs.

The volunteer champion is the liaison between volunteer services and the staff at the BMC.
Working Together

Volunteers play an integral role in our programs:

- P.A.W.s.
- Student Volunteers
- Classroom Volunteers
- Clerical Volunteers
- Recovery Volunteers
Interview and Screening Volunteers

- Is the volunteer a good fit for the BMC?
- What qualities in a volunteer are we looking for?
- Provide volunteers with boundaries
- Engage volunteers
- Clarify volunteer duties
Volunteer Growth at the BMC

- Child Life Volunteers
- Hospitality Volunteers
- Chemical Dependency Program Volunteers
**Volunteer Onboarding**

**Who can volunteer?**
- Anyone from the Community
- Employees
- Students

**Volunteer Process:**
- Receive Application
- Obtain Two Reference Responses
- Interview Applicant
- Refer to BMC for additional Interview
- Complete Volunteer Orientation
- Background Check
- Health Clearance
- Activation
- 1st day of volunteering at BMC/ Additional hands on training
Volunteer Services Stats

- 2014
  - Total applications = 1,897
  - Fully onboarded volunteers = 686
  - Total internal hours = 65,721
  - Total external hours = 87,728
  - Active + Inactive = 700–1000
Maintain Updated Compliance

- Volunteer Services is able to track and maintain all yearly volunteer compliance requirements including:
  - Influenza Immunization
  - TB Clearance
  - Blue Book
  - HIPAA

- Volunteer Services can accurately track how many hours volunteers contribute to the SACHS Clinic.
  - Log onto the Volunteer Dashboard from any computer.
  - Record volunteer hours via their online Volunteer Dashboard.
P.A.W.s. Volunteers

Requirements for P.A.W.s. Participation are the following:

- Current Certification from one of the following organizations:
  - Pet Partners
  - Therapy Dogs International
  - Therapy Dogs, Inc.
  - Love on a Leash
- Complete Volunteer Services onboarding process
- Complete Pet Profile provided by Volunteer Services
Training a new P.A.W.s. Volunteer

Training consists of...

- One – one on one training with a current P.A.W.s. volunteer
- Two – hands on training session without new canine companion
- Two – hands of training sessions with new canine companion
- Testing of knowledge/ability of all rules and regulations
- Completion of Training Survey
B.M.C. and P.A.W.s

- P.A.W.s Program launched in 2012
- Reviewed evidence based practice
- Focused on infection control
- Developed policies
- Developed programming
- Started with Senior unit first
Involves dogs and their handlers to offer opportunities for patients to form human–animal interaction to further promote healing.

Structured setting three days a week in five separate group therapy sessions with children, adolescents and adults.

Extended to Behavioral Health Institute (BHI), where pet visits has been integrated into the child and adolescent out-patient program.
Screening Patients

- Primarily done during initial intake by nursing.
- Consent form are given to the guardian of minors. A signature from the guardian provides permission for the minors to attend group.
- Adult population required.
- Precautions identified during screen:
  - Allergies
  - PTSD
  - History of animal abuse
B.M.C. and P.A.W.s.

Group Process

- Pet visitation is conducted in a group format.

- Group is lead by group leader and handler and pet.

- Clients are seated in a circular formation.

- Once clients are seated, group leader provides hand sanitizer before group begins and after group ends.

- Once clients are situated, group leader introduce the handler and the pet.

- The handler walks the pet while on a leash around the group formation, allowing quality time with each client.
B.M.C. and P.A.W.s.

Group Process

- Topics of discussion:
  - Healthy Relationships
  - Love
  - Responsibility
  - Commitment
  - Abandonment
  - Neglect
  - Relaxation
  - Exercise
  - Friendship
  - Kindness
  - Empathy
  - Forgiveness
B.M.C. and P.A.W.s.

Benefits from Pet Visits include:

- Mental Health
- Helps children overcome speech and emotional disorders
- Lifts spirits and lessens depression
- Decreases feelings of isolation and alienation
- Encourages communication
- Provides comfort
- Increases socialization
- Reduces boredom
- Lowers anxiety
- Creates motivation for the client to recover faster
- Reduces loneliness
Quarterly Epidemiology report includes:
- Number of P.A.W.s. visits
- Group leaders comments about the visit
- Patient population that is being visited
- Incidents during visit
Here at the BMC we truly value and appreciate our handlers and companions. The impact they make week after week with our patients and staff is significant. Then compassion that they show to those we serve is an inspiration for us all!